

charity organization societies, and schools of philanthropy are some other agencies available for education.

"This kind of instruction would also tend to inspire a higher appreciation of district nursing and to encourage more nurses to stay in the work for long periods. Sincerely yours,

"JOHN M. GLENN,
"Department of Charities and Corrections, Baltimore."

[Miss Dock's letter comes in as we close our pages, and is given here because of its interest and importance.—ED.]

THE affairs of the English nursing world are in a most astonishing condition. The movement for registration has developed opposition of such an inexplicable character and has brought about so many unexpected developments that it is a good deal like reading a very complicated novel.

The meeting at the Board of Trade to hear arguments against the city financiers' license to incorporate and promote the higher education of nurses brought out an opposition which may be called overwhelming without any exaggeration. It sounds almost ludicrous to hear that against the scheme appeared *thirteen societies*, both of medical men and nurses, and for it *six individual persons!*

The medical men are coming out splendidly in their support of State registration, and at this meeting the representatives of the British Medical Association, the British Gynæcological Society, the Midland Medical Society, and the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland were present in force and condemned the scheme in most explicit terms. The nurses appeared as representatives of the Royal British Nurses' Association, the Society for State Registration, the Matrons' Council, St. Bartholomew's League, the Irish Nurses' Association, the Registered Nurses' Society, and the Metropolitan Infirmary Matrons. The Scottish Committee for Promoting State Registration was represented, and, funniest turn of whimsical fate, Mr. Sydney Holland, representing the Central Hospital Council, was there fighting on the same side with the people whom he usually meets with lance and shield. The defence of the scheme was made by Mr. Cosmo Bonsor, one of the financiers, who explained that they had been "approached by trained ladies" and asked to form the company. It thus seems clear that the seven bankers were only being obliging and good-natured and doing what they thought was requested by nurses, in whom they all take the greatest interest. They had no intention of interfering in professional details, but only to run the business

end. Impulsive and ill-considered as their action was, it is quite plain that their motives were the best—in fact, altogether fatherly, and that they were as injudicious as many fathers. It rather seems as if they had been drawn into trouble which they did not deserve.

The worst feature of the whole affair has been that it has been gotten up in the dark. This alone would be enough to condemn it. The proceedings were carried on with the utmost secrecy, and matrons who were approached were spoken to most guardedly and asked not to mention it. If Mrs. Fenwick had not had “second sight” the whole thing would have been sprung without warning, and doubtless many would have joined it who now have been frightened away by the storm. An evidence of this secrecy was that Mr. Bonsor refused to say what matrons had approved the plan, although Mr. Sydney Holland demanded their names as a right to which the public was entitled. The matron of Guy’s Hospital, Miss Maule, of *Nursing Notes*, and our Miss Wood were the only ones who appeared for it, and we cannot but think that, however good their intentions may have been, their error of judgment has been great. However, it is not apparent that they originated the plan. The presence of one long and well-known for ambition and mischief-making in English nursing affairs gave the final clue. The plan is killed, for it is certain after this demonstration that no nurses would register with it.

Another result of the registration campaign has been the appearance of a new weekly nursing journal, printed on very poor paper and with cheap-looking cuts, and a degree of mild innocuousness about like that of the woman’s page in our Sunday papers. It is published by the Macmillan Co., who are innocent enough to say on the first page that they alone and no one else is behind it! Some slight knowledge of publishers gives this lamb-like remark a most delicious flavor.

This new journal is not going to mention “nursing politics.” This is a sort of war-cry now among certain people. What we rightly and justly call vital and important conditions under which, as workers, we have to work, and under which, as human beings, we live and by which we are affected in our whole education and progress are here called “nursing politics.” I find the term flippant and discourteous.

It seems to me that the one and only reason for nursing journals is that they shall express the opinions of nurses. I rate literary attainment and even scientific professional articles in importance far below the actual real impression of our sisterhood and its work that we get from our own journals. We do not need sugared pills. If we want the latest discovery in medicine there are splendid medical journals, and if we want the woman’s movement there are fine women’s journals. What we want in a nursing journal is to hear our members speak; to know what they

are doing; to exchange our thought with theirs; to feel the drawing together.

But as long as money is to be made we will have the lay pabulum in plenty.

The Select Committee is still hearing evidence, and I told them something of the effect of our registration acts, but rather imagine that they look upon us as awful examples and that it did more harm than good.

A year ago they were still asking the same questions that they are asking to-day about what can be done if a registered nurse deteriorates, and if it would not be advisable to register two classes of nurses. Having now been at three sittings, I feel it not unjust to make a criticism that, after one hearing only, would perhaps have seemed uncalled for, and that is, that as a whole they do not compare well with our legislative committees that we have appeared before at home in broad grasp of principles and in quickness of understanding. To this criticism I except the chairman and perhaps three others. The rest spend an inconceivable amount of time in higgling over insignificant details and supposititious difficulties, and do not yet seem to have realized that it is an educational question. Then, at least three of them in their cross-questioning show a spirit of "heckling" such as we have never met at home. I noticed this last year when Miss Amy Hughes and Miss Hobson were examined, to say nothing of the male nurse, who was hectored, and again this year with Mrs. Fenwick, and I am told they did the same with Miss Lückes. My impression at this moment (I hope I am wrong) is that they will not report favorably.

L. L. Dock.

[LETTERS to the editor must be accompanied by the name in full and address of the writer, otherwise such communications cannot be recognized. The name need not appear in the JOURNAL unless so desired.—Ed.]

